



St. Croix Foundation (A Year in Review)

A Message from Our President



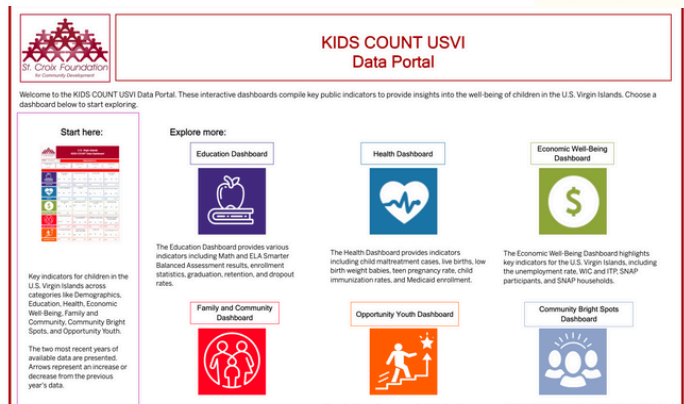
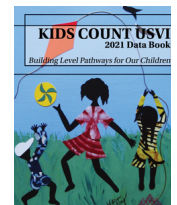
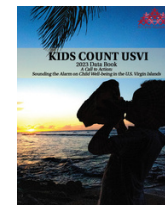
As we close the chapter on 2024, I find myself reflecting not just on the challenges we've all endured, but on the extraordinary grace and resilience that emerged in response. This past year tested our systems, our spirits, and our resources—yet, in true Crucian fashion, we stood together. At St. Croix Foundation, that togetherness is what fuels our work. Whether through data, disaster resilience, youth empowerment, or the revitalization of our historic spaces, we remain grounded in our mission to serve our People and Place with radical care and unwavering accountability.

Wine in the Warehouse was a shining example of what that rooted commitment looks like in practice: an event that gathered public and private partners, civic leaders, nonprofits, and everyday community champions under one roof—not just to celebrate, but to invest in the long game of transformation. Our Foundation continues to serve as a convener, an incubator, and a fierce steward of equity. And as we prepare to enter our 35th year of service, we remain deeply committed to placekeeping and to building systems that reflect the beauty, strength, and genius of our community. Thank you for walking this journey with us.

KIDS COUNT USVI: A Summit, A Call to Action, A Systems Shift

This year, St. Croix Foundation's KIDS COUNT USVI Initiative took a major step forward in systems change with the launch of its inaugural KIDS COUNT Summit, Answering the Call: We Are the System and the Solution. Held in partnership with the Office of the Governor, the Summit brought together cross-sector stakeholders—from public officials and nonprofit leaders to educators and community organizers—to explore new ways of building and sustaining systems that support the well-being of our children.

Rooted in the Foundation's guiding principle that "Relationship is the Revolution," the Summit fostered honest dialogue, deep collaboration, and data-driven exploration of our role in shaping the systems around us. Powerful presentations included a thought-provoking short film, Sankofa, and insights from national systems change leaders like Tuesday Rivera and Dr. Ulcca Joshi Hansen. It was, in every sense, a radical space for reflection, reconnection, and forward movement.





KIDS COUNT USVI also had an active year in advocacy and data collection. In 2024, our research and testimony directly informed legislation to increase child support payments, reignited efforts to reinstate the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and supported ongoing policy discussions around poverty and population decline. SCF's President Deanna James presented before the USVI Senate multiple times, emphasizing the urgent implications of our rapidly aging and declining child population.

Beyond the Summit, our team continues to work hand-in-hand with government and community partners to expand access to quality data. In December, SCF will release two new KIDS COUNT data products, including the Territory's first interactive data dashboard, developed with support from the HIVE Fund. With over 12 local agencies contributing data, the dashboard will become a critical tool for funders, policymakers, and program developers alike.

Through KIDS COUNT, the Foundation is building more than data infrastructure—we are cultivating a culture of accountability, collaboration, and action. As we often say: we are not just collecting numbers; we are telling the story of our children. And in 2024, the Territory's story was one of urgency, resilience, and resolve.

SCF Hosts 6th Annual Philanthropy Retreat: Rooted in Place



Over President's Day Weekend, St. Croix Foundation hosted its 6th Annual Philanthropy Retreat, Rooted in Place: Cultivating Resilience and Radical New Systems of Equity in Black Communities. From February 15–17, 2024, national philanthropic leaders gathered with local nonprofit partners for three days of strategic dialogue, systems thinking, and relationship-building—all rooted in our shared commitment to equity and transformation.

The retreat kicked off with high-level roundtables between SCF's leadership and national funders, exploring place-based philanthropic strategies tailored to the unique needs of our island. The following day, partners took part in a full island tour while members of our Nonprofit Consortium convened for our Board of All Boards (BOAB) workshop—focused on strengthening governance and aligning nonprofit missions with

the realities of local and global change. The two groups united in the afternoon for cross-sector dialogue and future planning. We closed the weekend in true Crucian fashion: enjoying the vibrancy of Agrifest and celebrating community investment at our Celebration of Philanthropy, hosted at The Social Beer Garden in downtown Christiansted.

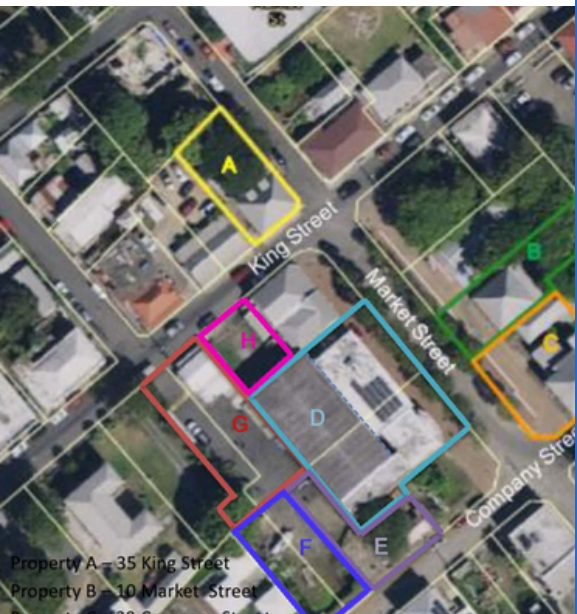
This year's retreat welcomed representatives from over eight national organizations, including the Association of Black Foundation Executives, the Center for Heirs Property Preservation, Enterprise Community Partners, Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, Quantum Foundation, and St. Luke's Foundation. Virtual guests also joined from The Hive Fund and the Panta Rhea Foundation.

To date, SCF's philanthropy retreats have convened over 45 national funders, generating more than \$5 million in philanthropic support for nonprofits and place-based initiatives across the Virgin Islands. And we're just getting started.

Schematics Complete: The Alexander Theatre Moves One Step Closer to Reality

St. Croix Foundation is proud to announce that architectural schematics have been completed for the long-awaited restoration of the historic Alexander Theatre! As the anchor project within our Healing Humanities Initiative in Sunday Market Square, the Alexander Theatre is being designed as both a state-of-the-art performing arts center and one of the Territory's largest community disaster shelters.

With critical federal support from HUD and FEMA secured for the shelter retrofit, the Foundation is actively seeking \$2 million in private philanthropic funding to bring the full vision of a vibrant cultural hub to life. The Alexander Theatre will soon be a place where culture, safety, and creativity converge—a venue rooted in resilience and built for the future of St. Croix.



A First for the Territory: SCF Partners with Mercy Corps to Develop a Comprehensive Resilience Hub

This year, SCF began laying the groundwork to develop the Virgin Islands' first comprehensive Resilience Hub—a transformative partnership with Mercy Corps that will strengthen our island's disaster readiness and equitable community development.

More than just a shelter, this hub will be a living, breathing space that integrates renewable energy, food sovereignty, communication systems, and culturally grounded emergency planning. When completed, it will serve as a national model for grassroots, place-based resilience in vulnerable communities—centered on people, place, and partnership.

SCF Expands Scholarship Impact with Over \$32,000 Awarded in 2024

In 2024, St. Croix Foundation proudly expanded its scholarship support to empower more young leaders, awarding over \$32,000 in scholarships to eleven deserving students pursuing higher education across the United States. Through the Lang-Wise STEM Scholarship Fund, the Patrick and Amelia Williams Opportunity Fund, the SCEC 20th Anniversary Reunion Committee Fund, and the Foundation Scholars Fund, the Foundation ensured that a diverse cohort of rising scholars—many studying STEM, education, and health—received the financial backing and encouragement to pursue their dreams and give back to their community. From future forensic accountants to biomedical engineers, these young changemakers are committed to solving real-world problems, including improving systems in the Virgin Islands.



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The Foundation's commitment to education isn't just about financial support—it's about building a culture of empowerment, equity, and place-based investment. At every awards ceremony, recipients expressed not only gratitude, but also a shared desire to return home and make a meaningful impact. Their stories, and those of the generous donors who make these scholarships possible, are a powerful reminder of the ripple effect of philanthropy rooted in place. As SCF continues to invest in our youth, we invite our community to support and expand this critical work, because the future of the Virgin Islands depends on the success of its next generation.

When Sanaa Burke applied to the Patrick & Amelia Williams Opportunity Fund in 2021, she didn't receive a traditional scholarship award—yet something about her stood out. Her passion, determination, and a bold pledge to “put St. Croix on the map” left an indelible mark. SCF President Deanna James saw the fire in her and ensured Sanaa received support. Today, that investment is bearing fruit: now a rising senior studying Meteorology at the University of Delaware, Sanaa recently gained national attention for her reporting on Tropical Storm Ernesto. Having experienced the devastation of Hurricanes Irma and Maria firsthand during high school, she vowed to one day shine a light on her island—and she's doing just that. And if you ask us, this is just the beginning for Sanaa Burke.

AmeriCorps VISTA Spotlight: Welcoming Two New Members to the SCF Team

As the official territorial sponsor for AmeriCorps VISTA, St. Croix Foundation continues to provide full oversight for this critical national service program—supporting nonprofit partners focused on youth, environmental justice, and food security. Since December 2023, SCF has managed six VISTA placements, assisting four local organizations while also absorbing all administrative costs to ensure program continuity.

In 2024, SCF proudly welcomed two new VISTAs to the team: Vernice Burgher is a seasoned writer, editor, and designer with over 20 years of creative experience. A passionate storyteller and advocate, Vernice brings a deep commitment to uplifting her community through service, creativity, and mentorship.

Chevon Miles, affectionately known as Chef Chevy, is a dynamic artist, culinary expert, DJ, and experiential designer. Her work centers on creating meaningful connections through food, art, and cultural expression.

As we look ahead, SCF is actively working to expand this vital program, responding to the growing demand from community organizations seeking capacity-building support through AmeriCorps VISTA.



Wine in the Warehouse 2024: A Celebration Rooted in Community



In 2024, Wine in the Warehouse once again proved why it's one of the most anticipated events of the Crucian holiday season. With over 500 guests, 45+ curated wines from presenting sponsor CCI, and an unforgettable culinary spread led by Celebrity Chef Digby Stridiron alongside Central High School's culinary students, the evening was a vibrant celebration of food, fun, and philanthropy. From the joyful energy of the moko jumbies to the buzz around our locally sourced silent auction, the night was nothing short of magical.

Hosted at Bohlke International Aviation and supported by a dedicated team of 50+ volunteers, this event continues to bring together community members, business leaders, and civic partners from all walks of life. Most importantly, Wine in the Warehouse fuels the work of the St. Croix Foundation year-round—supporting everything from education to advocacy, cultural preservation to community revitalization.

Mark your calendars for Friday, December 5, 2025, and help us make next year's celebration even more impactful. Whether as a sponsor, vendor, guest, or volunteer—we invite you to join us as we raise a glass to the power of rooted philanthropy!

In Loving Memory of Gladys Krigger-Washington

With deep sorrow and profound gratitude, we honor the life and legacy of our beloved Board Chair, Gladys Krigger-Washington.

A daughter of the soil and a giant in the field of Southern philanthropy, Gladys was more than a leader—she was a mentor, a visionary, and a beacon of integrity. After retiring from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, she returned home to St. Croix with a fierce commitment to give back. Since joining our Board, her wisdom, compassion, and fearless pursuit of justice have shaped our mission and inspired our team every single day.

Gladys believed in the power of community, in bold leadership rooted in love, and in the promise of a better future for the Virgin Islands. Her light remains with us—in the work we do and the lives we touch.

Rest well, Gladys. You are forever part of our story.

